JOHNNY CRAPEAUD:

A Legend of Bygone Days.

AFTER

THE LATE THOMAS INGOLDSBY, ESQ.

TORONTO:
PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF SYLTESTR BLOWHOLE.
1851.

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Johnny Crapeaud:

A LEGEND OF BYGONE DAYS.

I.

COME hither! come hither! draw nigh your chairs,
And list to a legend of bye-gone years,—
A quaint old story of long, long ago,
About a French Bishop, named *Johnny Crapeaud;*
Who, with Priest and Friar,
And Jesuit Telliar,
Lived in Toronto—perhaps you know.
Their Sovereign Lord the Pope they served,
And little for England's weal they cared;
But never, I ween,
Such professions were seen
Of love and loyalty for our Queen!

II.

The Pope of that day,
I have heard people say,
Looked glum as his glory was passing away;
But, to prop up his powers,
He called in fresh rowers,
And with this new crew,
Raised a hillabulloo!

Better the aid of these Jesuit Fathers
Than "Mary, hail!" or a host of Paters!
They were sharp lads all,
Both great and small,
And little they cared about earthly means:
The end excused them—the Church's gains,—
And, far and wide, they would wish to see
The spread of their arch-apostacie.
Two and two,
With jowls so blue,
And mighty long "Traceys" down to the shoe,
Here and there,
A Jesuit pair
Would poke in their noses for something to do!

III.

Now, the Pope of that day was a liberal man,
And at first he spoke light of the Jesuit plan:
Their dream of "Theocracy,"
He called hypocrisy!
But vipers will bite,
And turn in spite;
And so they did now on this poor old man,—
Who, dressed in plush breeches,
That needed some stitches
(The seat of the beast
Was naked, at least),
An old drab coat and a powdered wig,
He took to his heels in this saintly rig.
But a Pope out of Rome was like fish out of water,

So he called in the aid of his "eldest daughter;"
Who, like Charles the Bold,
In days of old,
Without any pity
Did pummel the city!
Nobly the Jesuits' game was won,
And the Pope was brought back on a thundering gun:
Though trumpets sound and banners wave,
The Pope was the Jesuits' abject slave!

IV.

Now, just at that time, that heretic Queen
Whose Empire ne'er yet without daylight has been,
Had some humbugging servants, who cared not a pin,
So they were the lick-pans and scraped up the tin,
And when rather mellow,
Would be the hail fellow
Of Satan himself, if he'd lend them a hand,
And, their net to get fish in,
Would send to perdition
All that was greatest and best in the land,—
They'd league with the devil
Himself, and do civil,
By kissing the toe
Of the Pope, you must know,—
And forthwith they sent off a Lord Plenipo.!
Now, the Pope, when he saw him, could hardly believe
His eyes, as he chuckled and laughed in his sleeve:
"Oh, ho!" thought the Pope, "that fair land is my own,
And Scriptural truth from the world's now flown!"

And a happier man 'neath St. Peter's dome
Was not to be found than the Pope of Rome.
In visions of fancy he revelled all day,
Dreaming Great Britain acknowledged his sway;
And, mighty romantic,
Across the Atlantic,
The shade of his mitre was far, far away.
"This Empire so wide
"Let us now divide,"
Said the Pope to the Cardinals by his side:
"Let *magistri artibus*,
"Bishops *in partibus*,
"And Vicars-Apostolic, henceforth end!
"Instead of such *nondescripts*, now we'll send
"A Cardinal Lord Archbishop, or two,
"With many a holy friar true,—
"Bishops and Priests and Friars, a band,
"My coffers to fill with the fat of the land!
"First, let Johnny Crapeaud
"Immediately go
"To Toronto, as Bishop; while Nicholas Wiseman
"Shall bleed the poor Cockneys, as Popish exciseman:
"That heretic Queen! let him thunder against her,
"As Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Westminster."

V.

Now, Johnny Crapeaud was the broth of a boy,
And the words of His Holiness filled him with joy;
Forthwith on his mission he hurried away,

But he picked up some "tin" before crossing the "say."
But, arrived in Toronto,
He found such a want o'
Liege subjects, he really had nothing to do.
But presently there,
By the Lord Bishop's chair,
To earwig the Bishop, two Jesuits were near:
One was Telliar, so well known to fame;
The other was Esau McBriarson by name.
This last kept a scho[illegible]
And the pedagogue
On his marrowbones fell to H[illegible]p, they say,
And cried—"Boys a[illegible]
"Composing my classes,
"Rest assured, to your Lordship I'll bring them some day!
"Be not uneasy,—no longer look blue,—
"With the help of your slave, you'll have plenty to do!"
Now, just at that day,
As I've heard people say,
The youngsters were docked of their holiday play,
And a cargo of brooms
Had arrived for the rooms,
Where notions, not boys, were taught shooting each day;
And Esau McBriarson oft raised a screech,
By a close application of birch to the breech.
But Johnny Crapeaud thought that no one but he
Entrusted with boys' education should be:
The masters he threatened; and asked the Trustees
To give him three schools, just to treat as he'd please;
But they snubbed the Lord Bishop, and "*pished*" at his letter.
Ignoramusses all!—they knew nothing better!

VI.

Our little Jack Frog
Was sipping his grog,
Or may be a glass of whiskey toddy,
When Esau rushed in
With the deuce of a din,
And Telliar close at his heels in the lobby;
Then, suddenly kneeling,
And sneakingly feeling
Their way from the door, with their eyes to the ceiling;
When Esau, more bold,
The news did unfold.
The Bishop looked round, with a gaze of surprise,
And the toddy reflected the whites of his eyes—
(Now some say his eyes reflected the toddy;
But whether 'twas so,
Or whether 'twas not,
So far as my legend, I care not a jot)—
His Lordship, amazed, for ten minutes ne'er spoke;
When he thought on their tale, he exclaimed, "'Tis a joke!
"They dare not," said he, "my behest to deny:
"I'll write them again, and demand a reply."
For pen, ink and paper,
He called, and a wafer,
And he sent off the glasses as well as the plates;
And he took up the poker, and cleared out the grates;
And, having got rid of the emptied can,
His Lordship his letter thus began:
"Ven me ask de tree schools,
"In de teeth of your rules,

"*Ma volonte*——be de law," he exclaimed with a shout,
That brought from the ceiling
Some symptoms of feeling,
Whilst echoed the walls this Episcopal rout.
But the Board, if you please,
Seemed quite at their ease,
And Johnny Crapeaud
Soon saw 'twas "no go!"
So he cursed them at board—he cursed them at bed—
And every evil called on their head;
He cursed them eating as well as drinking;
He cursed them sleeping, waking, winking;
He bid them dream of the devil at night,
And prayed they might wake in a terrible fright;
To these, he added many things worse:
In truth, it was a terrible curse!
Then he raised his eyes,
With a look of surprise,
For——no body seemed one copper the worse!
Now, whether "The Chair" was moved by the curse,
Or shook at his knees,
Or dreaded to sneeze,
My muse does not say; but I've heard people tell
He threw him a sign,
Which I cannot divine,
But must leave that to some "Worshipful Deputy Grand,"
I can only describe what he did with his hand:
The left hand he put out—the fingers he spread—
The tip of his right little finger he led
To the thumb of the other,
And raising its brother

To the side of his nose, he just said, "Ho! Ho!"
"Don't you wish you may get it? my Johnny Crapeaud."
This magical sign as a talisman served,
And Johnny Crapeaud was completely unnerved.
Like dog caught in larder, he uttered a roar,
And, tail twixt his legs, he rushed to the door,—
Bell, book, and candle, near leaving behind:
The last, by ill luck, was blown out by the wind.

XI.

How the quarrel might go, 'twere not easy to tell,
But he took the back door, as he rushed in the dark,
And the steps being gone, to the bottom he fell;
And thus he got rid of "the vital spark."

XII.

'Twere well it was so,
For a terrible blow
Now fell on the Pope!
As much would have more,
John Bull closed the door,
And the ill-gotten wealth
Of the Jesuit brothers,
For the good of their health,
Was given to others;
Chapels and lands
They quickly changed hands; [remarked it,
And the grounds round St. Michael's--no doubt you have
Were turned at once to a New Central Market!

"Me vished it to be *un juste milieu* payment,
"Accepted from you,
"As de bit of *mon* due.
"Your conduct, therefore, *J'intend* wid amazement;
"I *vraiment* foresee
"Inconvenient 'twill be,
"And as tree you vont *give*, me vill *take* from you seven!
"De law *à la lettre*,
"I read *beaucoup* better:
"'Description' and 'kind'
"Means 'what's to my mind.'
"*Je vous demande* seven; de same you must give;
"If no, den repent—*aussi longe que vous* live!
"Your *mauvais instructeurs*, I'll pack them all home,
"And put *en leur place des jolies garcons*,
"*Célibitaires* all,
"Both great and small;
"And as for *de mounaie*, *Je payerai mon même*,
"And soon you will see
Que brusque ve vill be;
"Wid the Pope *à mon dos* and his bull by my side,
"To carry my point, *au diable* me vould ride!"

VII.

Then he signed it "Johnny Crapeaud,
"Eke Lord Bishop of Toronto."

VIII.

He closed it up in a sheet of pink,
And superscribed it in deep blue ink;
Then sent for his page, and bid him call

With this modest request at the City Hall.
So he got in a sleigh,
And trotted away.
But the nice little page,
Though sharp for his age,
Never once dreamt they would do such a thing
As into the fire the letter to fling!
But such was its fate; and exit the page,
Banging the door in a terrible rage,
And homeward he hastened, his tale to tell.
"*Mon Dieu!*" "*Sacre Dieu!*" then slowly fell
From Johnny Crapeaud; who, with dignified look,
Now called for his candle, his bell, and his book:
'I'll crush this rebellion,—I'll go to the Hall,—
"I'll have what I ask for, or curse them all!"

IX.

Now, the curse of a priest, as the poets sing,
Was in days of yore a terrible thing;
If in *tender* compassion the fair sex were spared,
The weight of their vengeance aye fell on their "laird!"
And oh! I am told, 'twas a terrible sight
To see how the horns could grow, in a night,
From the brows of the husband on whom this curse fell,
And left him a prey to the torments of hell!

X.

The Board still assembled;
The Bishop came in;